

It fails alike at the bottom and at the top—we succeed neither in maintaining a high standard of common schooling for all London's children, whatever their poverty or the creed of their parents, nor yet in disseminating culture, developing reasoning power, or promoting original research "

The position at the bottom was truly alarming
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"Putting together what little is really known of all the thousand public elementary schools of London, including both Board and voluntary, there are competent observers who declare that nearly half of them containing about a quarter of the children, would probably be condemned as inefficient, either in respect of buildings or of sanitation, of staffing or equipment, of curriculum or real success in child-training, by a Swiss, a Danish, a Saxon, a Prussian, or a Massachusetts school inspector. As for the standard of education in the absence of a common national inspection, no one could answer "

It was perfectly true, and in his articles he states quite frankly, that the level of the voluntary schools was lower than that of the Board Schools, poor as that in many cases still was, and deplorable as the general level of absenteeism. What proportion bad Board Schools bore to the whole, or how bad were the worst, only the School Board Inspectors knew, so far as the two-sevenths of children educated in voluntary schools

"There is no resisting the inference that nearly all the hundred Roman Catholic Schools and probably three-hundred of the three-hundred and thirty-one Church Schools—having in the aggregate more than 150,000 children—are, so far as secular education is concerned, calamitously behindhand "

To have to pass this considered judgment on the average level of London education, came, so he says, as a shock of

surprise to him He does not say precisely when
he received
this shock, but, the facts once clear, his mind
set to work
upon them, with remarkable results

He rejected the view taken at the time by
most of his
Progressive friends that, since the voluntary
schools were
the worst, and since the Anglican, and still
more the